

## **PARTY IN HEAVEN**

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## **PARTY IN HEAVEN**

Today, we are going to wander about in a space trip, much more wonderful than the trips made by the space ships.

You may have heard that Paul the Apostle, made such a trip one day. He did not know whether it was in the body or in the soul, but he was caught up into Paradise where, according to what he said,

he saw: “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.” (1 Cor 2:9)

How anxious is each one of us to read, hear and explore the other world and its mysteries! That is why we enjoy what John wrote about the revelation he saw as he was in the Spirit of the Lord’s day. He saw our Lord Jesus Christ declare to him the secrets of the future saying: “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.” (Rev 1:8)

If we proceed with our trip, cross the material barriers and arrive at the gates of Paradise, we shall recognize many personalities we have already heard about, and have been anxious to meet.

## **I. Our first meeting’ at the gates of ParacEse is with “the Right Thief”**

Here is our conversatita with him

- We heard Jesus Christ say to you, “Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise.” Certainly you are among the very first to enter this place with him. Tell us what is this Paradise? Is it a beautiful garden full of abundance and fruits.. a garden under which rivers run?
- We are here in a waiting place in which the saints, God’s beloved gather in joy and perfect happiness. It is what you call in your prayers: “In the bosom of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob in green pastures, by the waters of restfulness, in the Paradise of delight, the place from which is fled all sadness, sorrow and sighing, in the light of Thy saints.” Here we have got only an earnest of glory, and we are waiting for the events of resurrection and the great day of judgement. The splendour of the place and its beauty drs not lie in its being a garden full of delights, but because the Lord Jesus Christ is in the midst of His saints revealed in all His glory. His beauty and splendour shine on the place and on those who are in it.
- How long did it take you to come from the earth to this place. Demas?
- You may remember what the Lord said to me as He was on the cross: “Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise.” Today It does not need any time at all to travel as you want. The Spirit has an unlimited speed and it does not need fine to get from one place to another:
- Then, why do we make the prayer called “the prayer far dismissal of the Spirit” on the third day after death?
- This prayer is not for the dismissal of the Spirit of the dead as some wrongly take it; it is made to dispel the Spirit of sadness away from the family or the dead, and to comfort its members.
- Generations have passed and the Church still repeats in her prayers some of your powerful words, when you said. “Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom.” What did you mean by these words?
- I meant the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ who will come to judge the living and the dead, and announce His eternal Kingdom above all creation, all peoples.

— Yes, Amen . . . Come Lord Jesus.

## **II. And we proceed to our second meeting with St. Paul, the Apostle of struggle**

- We heard you in your latter days saying, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.” As if you saw what was awaiting you after your departure!
- Yes, very clearly “having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better.” Didn’t I describe to you one day what I witnessed when I was caught up: “unspeakable word, which it is not lawful for a man to utter” and what “Eye hath not seen nor ear heard”
- We still repeat these words especially when we pray for the dead.
- Why do you call them dead? I don’t like this term. There is no death here but departure. God, Himself, says: “I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac. and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.”

The Church does not know death, and there are no dead among her true members, all are living. The Church is the Levi’s body, and the body of the Lord never dies. You should know that we are one living Church; some of her members have fought their fight, conquered and triumphed; others are still fighting, and the rest are still to come in future generations.

- Allow us, great master, to ask you about something important: Is prayer for the departed, of any use to them?
- The basis of the prayer for the departed, is our faith in the resurrection of the bodies and eternal recompense. These who departed have not been judged yet: they are in a state of waiting. On the day of judgement, there will be mercy for those that have shown mercy, and “mercy rejoiceth against judgement.”

Don’t you remember how I recommended Timothy to take care of the house of Onesiphorus after his departure and I prayed for his soul saying, “the Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day.” (2 Tim. 1:18).

- Does this mean that there is forgiveness after death?
- This is the Church’s true faith; that is why she prays for her dear departed that “If any neglect or slackness has overtaken them as mortals, repose O Lord and forgive them.”

## **III. And we come to our meeting with Our Holy Mother, the Virgin Mary.**

With her was a host of saints; fathers, prophets, apostles, martyrs, missionaries and confessors.

- Blessed art Thou O Mother of Light. All generations bless thee. We always resort to you and seek your protection when we are in distress and always find strong support from you. Do you know what is happening to us?

- Do YOU think that death separates us from you? **Never!** This has never happened. The view of the whole world is clear before us. We sympathize with you because you are not the children of heaven. We pray for you as you also pray for us.
- Truly, when we mention you in the saint's commemoration, we are ashamed of ourselves and we raise our voices in supplication, "Graciously, O Lord, remember all the saints... Foremost, she that is the Saint full of glory, the Virgin for all times, the Mother of God who gave birth to God the Word".

But soon we realize our own great need for your intercession for us and we cry from the depth: "O Lord, we are not worthy to pray that those saints be blessed. It is they who lift up our prayers before Thine Only begotten Son, interceding for us in our weakness and pitying us in our degradation.

Forgive us our sins for the sake of their holy supplications, and for Thy holy Name which is called upon us.

- The bonds that tie us with you are not physical bonds, but they are holy and spiritual, that get us together into deep spiritual love around the throne of the glorious Beloved.
- Oh honest Saint! Intercede for us to your Beloved Son. Be with us when our souls depart from our bodies — Amen.

**Conclusion:**

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- 2.
- 3.